

THE IMPACT OF 'HYBRID-WORK-MODEL' ON JOB SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

Corporates have long hassled to propose their employees with the finest potential working environment, one that encourages supreme productivity, efficiency, and revenue raising, as well as employee job satisfaction. Work from home was a frequent cost-cutting strategy used by corporations, but remote working has clearly resulted in relatively brief cost savings for many businesses, especially for small and medium businesses and startups. However, the long-term effects of some or all employees working from home have resulted in job unhappiness, social isolation/loafing, and non-collaborative work relationships, leading to greater stress among professionals, who must constantly juggle work and family life. The goal of this study is to learn about employee preferences for work environments as well as the impact of work environments on employees' subjective well-being with Hybrid-workplace solutions. Employee interests are investigated using a main survey that focuses on many facets of working remotely and operating from an office space, and the results can be used by employers in future regenerative workplace-design as solution, by considering all these variables.

KEYWORDS: Hybrid-Workplace-Solution, Remote Working, Social Isolation, Social Loafing, Regenerative -Workplace & Job- Satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

According to (Flore Pradère and James Taylor, September 2021), people expect their companies to be more caring and their workplace to offer a new regenerative experience as they transition from work-from-home to a post-pandemic future. The provision of health and wellness services has become critical to keep a workforce performing at its best in an ever-changing world. These offers must be backed up and developed by a desire to long-term employee happiness. They must be ingrained in a company's management and culture, and personnel at all levels must be involved. Leaders, of course, play a critical role; they must pave the way and accept the new duty of bringing the *Regenerative Workplace* to life to compensate for all the increased stress levels, demotivated potentials amongst professionals and detached work-relationships.

SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

The study's goal is to determine the impact of working from home on employee perceived mental and physical well-being, with the assumption that greater levels of subjective well-being leading to higher levels of job productivity and motivation amongst professionals. Employees prefer blended workplace environment over pure remote working, according to the study. The research examined the psychosocial effects of working remotely on employees, including social loafing, mental well-being, isolation, stress levels, feelings of detachment, unclear performance visions, and so on, taking into account their gender, marital status, age, and whether or not they have

children at home.

The study is confined to office workers in industries such as consulting, construction and real estate, training, and education, IT-ITeS/software solutions, and so on. The study is limited to the Indian market, although it can be utilised as a starting point for the others.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to (Lutz Bellmann, July 2020) remote work can act as counterpart or can placidly replace traditional office work-life. Although observations of the graph before Novel Corona Virus (SARS CoV2) pandemic, remote or distant working were quite discrepant and there has been a farcical shift towards “*work-from-home*” culture. If remote/distant work outlives the scheduled office hours, it can advance poor *work-life-balance*. As per the research from the author, it indicates influences the employees heterogeneously on job-satisfaction which temporarily augments. It is also accompanied by abatement in labor costs and lower productivity due to obvious disadvantage of decreasing face-to-face communications and increasing interactions via telecommuters, which has exhausted interpersonal bonds amongst co-workers.

Research by (Poornasree Haridas, July 2021), pitfall in productivity is the topmost critical factor due to “*Work-from-home*” as the employees are unable to interact physically and there are varying outcomes where employees can be either more efficient or will have zilch output delivery and it depends upon job characteristics variable and its complementary work-environment from home.

As per (Ravalier, 2018) revelation of negative chronic work results in presenteeism, poor job satisfaction and higher levels of turnover, which is due to high expectations and demands with lesser level of control. While (Mr. Ravin Singh, May 2017) stresses more on negatives of remote working as they demand more attention else, directly hampers productivity and makes employee-communication more arduous with forfeiting quality and speed.

On the contrary, key insights from (Global-research, Novembor 2020) indicates that 76% of the employees willingly wants to pursue *work-from-home* at least twice a week on an average and encourages this culture. However, the other 24% do not find this productive at all and wants to join the workplace soon because of hampering work motivation and disturbed networking amongst teams. It has been reported that the employees from the workplace are impelled emotionally and the workforce are asked for more output than they usually produce, thus 51% of the employees are facing stresses toll due to pressured mental health and compelled to contribute against their will, worrying about job-loss. The employees are expecting new services in return such as well-being services, healthcare services, childcare services, advanced food services and many more.

From the data analysis in (Jodi Oakman, 2020), it shows the *WFH (Work-from-home)* effects on mental & physical health, such as moderate to high risk of *stress, strain, depression & fatigue, which reportedly impacted highly on job motivation and satisfaction for the workforce*.

In (Banerjee, 2021) primary survey highlights that savings in time & money is the most opportune outcome from the *WFH culture* and highest lack of physical-human-interactions being the most depreciatory factor. It was observed from the survey that disturbance due to children in the home is a major distraction for the working women apart from the internet speed. It was evident from the responses that married men and women showed more interest in hybrid working rather than the unmarried demographics.

In (Social-facilitation, 2020) studies reflect that there are many theories and concepts that shows better performance of an individual working in a team when in front of spectators or audience, than in their absence. Following are some of the concepts and theories for reference:

Social Facilitation Theory

As per (Social-facilitation, 2020) it is improved performance of an individual while working in a team than working alone, which happens in relation to how well the skill has been have been learnt and was first introduced by psychologist Floyd in 1920. It can be multiple types such as co-action and audience effects. Co-action effect comes into play because of competing peers in the vicinity and the later comes into play when it is being viewed or observed by number of people or audience, which pressurizes them to perform the task or activity assigned in the best of their ability possible, as per (Banerjee, 2021)

Social Cues & Intrinsic Motivation

In the study presented by (Banerjee, 2021) and (Social-facilitation, 2020) it is a fact that people collaborated in a group or a team have higher satisfaction and motivation to perform their tasks than when performing individually, it is because of sense of togetherness they have a collective mission to accomplish and failing which will make them responsible for the group interest.

Employee Well-Being & Work-from-Home

A study from (Banerjee, 2021) shows that there is ill-effect work-from-home on employee's physical and mental health. Studies highlight that stress levels are found higher on working parents from home especially during the weekdays and it is subjective to various people with different capabilities.

Cognitive Factors

As described by Barron in 1986, cognitive factors such as difference in attention accustomed to task rather than attention to person effecting a task, modifies the actual performance. It shows that this nudges the people to perform with higher levels of motivation and escorts higher satisfaction eventually.

Affective Factors

As per Cortell in 1968, what affects the performance of the person is not being seen by audience but being judged by the way they perform. It's an abhorrence and discomfort of others approval and disapproval, which puts pressure on them to generate output effectively. It embroders the zeal and drive, and acts an arousal for accomplishments, which is absent when there aren't people or audience around

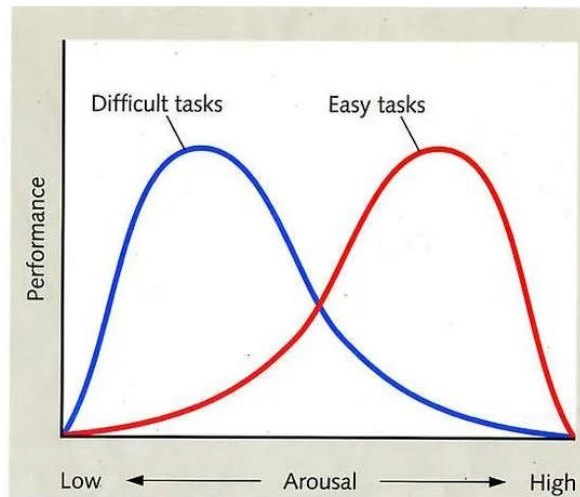


Figure 1: Yerkes Dodson Work Motivation Theory
(Source- <https://www.simplypsychology.org/Social-Facilitation.html#bio>).

Physiological Factors

Also, as per Zanjoc, presence or subsistence of others when added to the push or drive even in case of new or unfamiliar circumstances, people tend to have lowered or poor performances and adds to their stress limits.

As shown in the graph by (Simply Psychology-Social Facilitation, 2019) *“If a task is easy for the person, then the commanding response will be the rights answered or performed where the presence of others evokes it more, on contrary, in a difficult situation, the commanding response is wrongly or reprehensibly performed which is also evoked by the audience.”* (Social-facilitation, 2020)

Thus, by evaluating the *lack of motivation and enthusiasm towards productive tasks* and gradual disconnect with the workplace/ colleagues but also, convalescence of the organizations to call their employees **‘fully-on-site’**, the corporates have come up with a solution to provide leisure and safety together with **‘Hybrid-business-model’** by keeping the willingness and curiosity of the employees at forefront. There are many firms globally functioning with this prototype model, where they have 2-3 days per week in office with partial occupancy of working staff and the other days have **‘work-from-home’**, which has gained surprising acceptance and recognition amongst the employees, while they themselves are trying to *re-evaluate relationships with workplace*.

According to (Aaron De Smet, March) there is definitely a lesson to be learnt from COVID-19 and embrace the amplifying demand of **‘Hybrid workplace model’** amongst the employees and companies, where as per the global survey 40% of the employees are considering to resign from their jobs due to full-time workplace demand which was a pre-pandemic possibility whereas as per the employee survey from McKinsey of 2021, 52% of the employees demand a hybrid-workplace for post-pandemic scenarios. As per their survey studies, organizations should adapt this work model to retain their employees for longer, which brings them more productivity and motivation to generate work-outputs. It is credited by most of the employees from the survey that it bestows more personal flexibility even satisfies team collaborations with safety and expedites all the decision-making smoothly by appropriate social cohesion. Hence, embracing this **‘hybrid-culture’** can provide a mind-shift for many of the organizations to re-consider their decisions for the long run and, if they don’t accept and adapt soon, the firms can lose their talent walking out of the doors.

As per (Flore Pradère and James Taylor, September 2021), remote home working has resulted in an increase in emotions of loneliness, tension, and worry. Employees have struggled to create healthy boundaries between their work and personal life. Employers have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop a new Regenerative Workplace as they prepare their transition to a post-pandemic future.

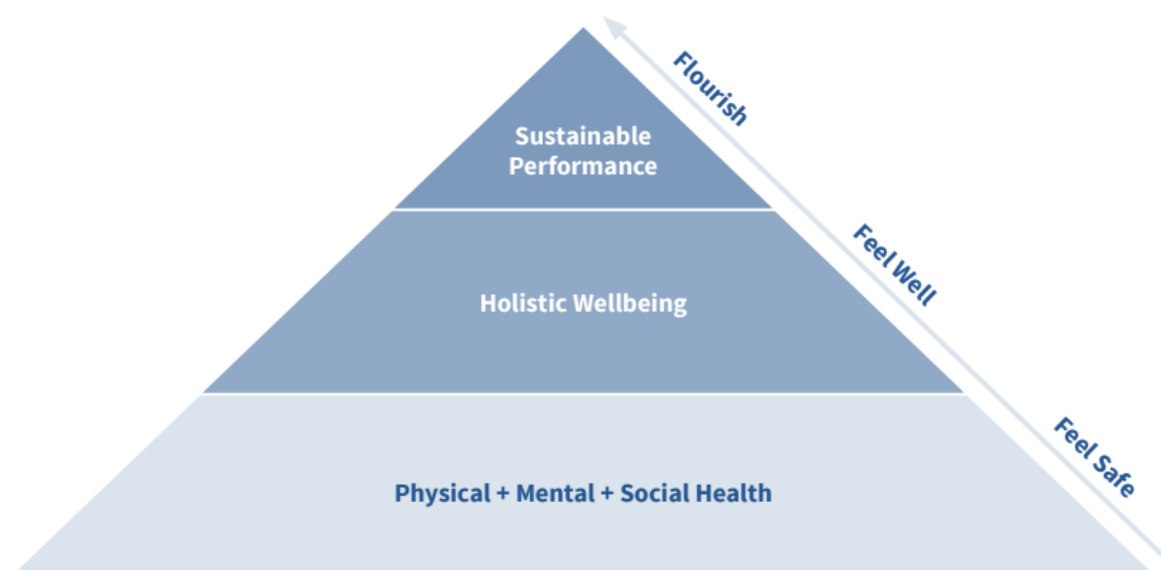


Figure 2: Regenerative Workplace Solutions (Credits: JLL Global research, September 2021).

According to (Pradère, 2021) professionals demand better balance in their work schedules, with hybrid work models and flexibility being especially important. Even while the office keeps its place in a transformed working environment in the post-COVID era, demands from the professional world are rising, with some remote work still preferred. During the pandemic, there was a huge shift in corporate working culture, with employees wanting to focus more on work-life balance with flexi-work hours and staying connected, and as correctly pointed out, when all of the employees' desires are ticked off wisely, business takes care of itself as people nowadays are increasingly missing the 'office-life' and the word remote-working fatigue is growing importance, thus flexibility in work-life pattern is now a 'must-have' for the corporate professionals.

As per the article of (Hogarty, April 6, 2021), The hybrid workplace is a combination of remote work and typical office employment that many firms are adopting, where employees can work two or three days from office and rest of the days remotely from home, as per job and team requirement. When a company permits its workers to work from home or in the office, it is referred to as a hybrid workplace. Employees in a typical hybrid workplace have the option of working in a central office, working from home, or combining the two. Employees in a hybrid office can choose whatever section of the workplace that best suits the sort of task they need to accomplish at the time, whether it's concentrating on a job in a quiet zone or catching up with coworkers over a cup of coffee. More importantly, the hybrid workplace allows employees to accomplish their best work wherever and whenever they want.

The employee experience is emphasized in the hybrid workplace. In the near term, when the pandemic declines and organizations reopen, hybrid working provides crucial reassurance. In the long run, however, the hybrid workplace provides flexibility to those who desire it. It appeals to a new class of workers who are looking for it. Employee happiness

is increased while costs are reduced in the hybrid workplace, as explained in (Hogarty, April 6, 2021)

The study of (Andrea Alexander, 2021, April) highlights that the main factor of anxiety are that, Employees believe they haven't heard enough about their employers' intentions for working conditions after COVID-19. Employees indicate that while organizations have stated their overall goal to support hybrid virtual work in the future, too few have offered precise guidelines, rules, objectives, and procedures. As per their workings, pure conditions of working from home has led to feeling of seclusion, communication breakdown, and increased anxiety at work which led them question for wanting more flexibility at working pattern. Prior to COVID-19, the preferred working model was from Office and work from home as per (Andrea Alexander, 2021, April) but, after the pandemic the times and desires have changed. Organizations are compelled to plan for more flexible 'Hybrid-working Model' to satisfy the needs of their employees in the long run.

According to (Andrea Alexander, 2021, April), A hybrid approach can assist firms in making the most of talent, regardless of where it is located, while also lowering costs and improving organizational performance.

Studies from (Andrea Alexander, 2021, April) displayed that, employees all across board want to see firms place a greater priority on flexibility, compensation and benefit, and well-being after the pandemic is over—but they're worried that future employment, whether on-site or remote, may negatively impact these demands. Professionals also worry that working on-site will increase their chances of becoming sick, and that working remotely will limit community and collaboration among coworkers.

The study from (CHRISTIE SMITH, April, 2021), people want the future of workplace to be hybrid because they believe the employees fared better as the employees can benefit from the best of both the worlds together, which resulted in healthier mental-being, better work relationships and decreased burnouts who worked entirely remote basis.

From the article (Thomas Stevens, 2021) as summarized about how it would impact global economy as a whole is that a transition to a hybrid finds applications is now being planned. Some people keep working from home, while others are resuming their traditional office jobs. One thing is certain: business travel will alter. Money flow and currency trading could be affected by a lack of migration from country to country. Furthermore, when employers determine how to schedule time in an office, companies with a hybrid model will no longer need to hold as many employees. The traveling procedure will also change when the number of people who travel to large metropolitan regions increases because of the hybrid model. As a result, after the virus has been eradicated, the hybrid approach will change the way we work.

METHODOLOGY

Table 1: Age Group Participation in Survey Analysis

S. no	Respondent's Age Group	Participation %
1.	18-25	56%
2.	26-39	32%
3.	40-60	12%

The above-mentioned research questionnaire was conducted via primary google form survey for the working professionals, it was framed with respect to the current market scenario requirements with respect to the working-models. It addressed considerable factors such as:

- Impact of working from home on various age group, mental health, productivity, and job satisfaction.
- Employees challenges faced while purely WFH culture.
- Employee perspectives of inefficient video meetings leading to working frustrations.
- Ascertained employee aspects on advantages of Hybrid -Work-Model.
- Employee's exemplification of contrasting stress pattern from 'Hybrid work' model to 'Work-from-Home' model.

Sample Set

The survey encompassed 130 working professionals from the field of construction & real estate, IT/ItES /Software industry / Higher education students, Education & training, Consultancy services, media & entertainment, and industrial sectors. It comprised of 51% males and 49% females. 22% of the respondents have children at home and the remaining 78% don't. Out of all, 17% of the respondents prefer to have "Full-time on-site office" work-life, 10% prefer purely "work-from-home" and the remaining 73% desire "hybrid-work-pattern".

Table 2: Work Experience Participation (Source: Primary Survey)

S. no.	Work-Experience Group (Years)	% Participation
1.	0-2	58%
2.	2-4	16%
3.	5-10	7%
4.	10-15	7%
5.	15+	12%

Out of all the respondents, 78.46% of them have experience of working from home for 0-2 years and 5% have 2-4 years of remote working experience, whereas nearly 1% of them have 5-10 years of remote working experience and 15.54% have no remote work experience ever, as per the survey responses.

Along with the examination of total compiled responses, the sample set was divided on the assumption that the psychological, social well-being, and productivity implications of working from home differences based on gender, relationship status, presence of offspring, and other factors. Everyone who took part in the survey gave their approval.

OBSERVATIONS

When given an opportunity to opt in future the working modes, 72% respondents opted for hybrid-work pattern as "Yes", 11% as "No" and 18% as their preference as "Maybe".

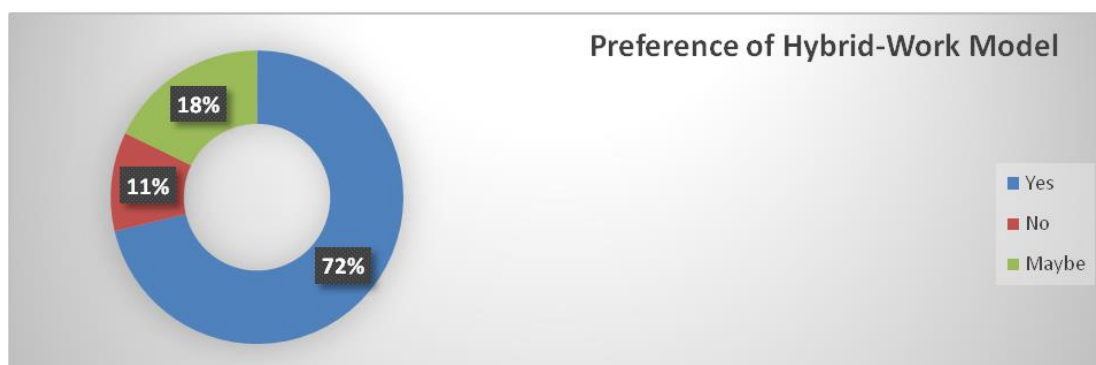


Figure 3: Preference of Work Model (Source: Primary Survey Analysis).

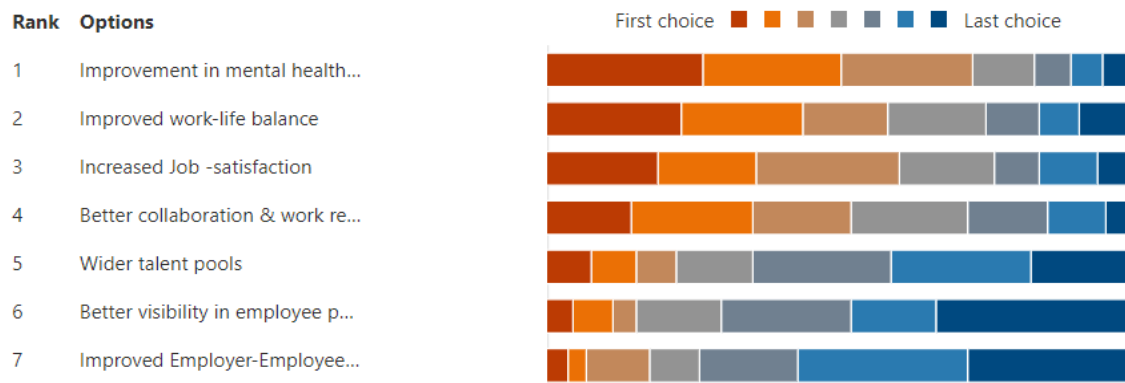


Figure 4: Observed Advantages of Hybrid Work Culture (Source: Primary Survey).

This study demonstrates the relevance of office spaces and the necessity for real estate to investigate future solutions that will facilitate collaboration from anywhere. This indicates that, while theories such as ‘social-facilitation’ and ‘social-loafing’ explain how coworkers in the workplace having helps employees work better and more successfully, employees nowadays prefer a hybrid work culture over pure office work or the WFH pattern. Employee flexibility and the relevance of flexi spaces in this age are evident in the flexible workplace culture choices.

Further ahead, when asked about the experienced benefits of ‘Hybrid-work-pattern’, 26.9% agreed to ‘improvement in mental health’, 23.10% agreed to ‘Improved-work-life-balance’, 19.2% acceded to ‘Increased Job-satisfaction’ 14.6% acknowledged ‘better collaboration and work-relationships’, 7.7% believed with ‘Wider talent pools’, better visibility in employee performance was observed by 4.6% and 3.8% recognized to ‘improved employer-employee relations’ over the conventional office work-life and work-from-home pattern.

On the contrary many challenges and distractions were experienced by employees from various sectors for pure “work-from-home” model, such as pitfall in work productivity, blurred line between personal and professional work-life, decreased job satisfaction, failing network issues, lowering work motivation, lack of creativity, number of distractions, reduced supervision and direction along with challenges of social isolation, increased workloads, and unclear performance metrics.

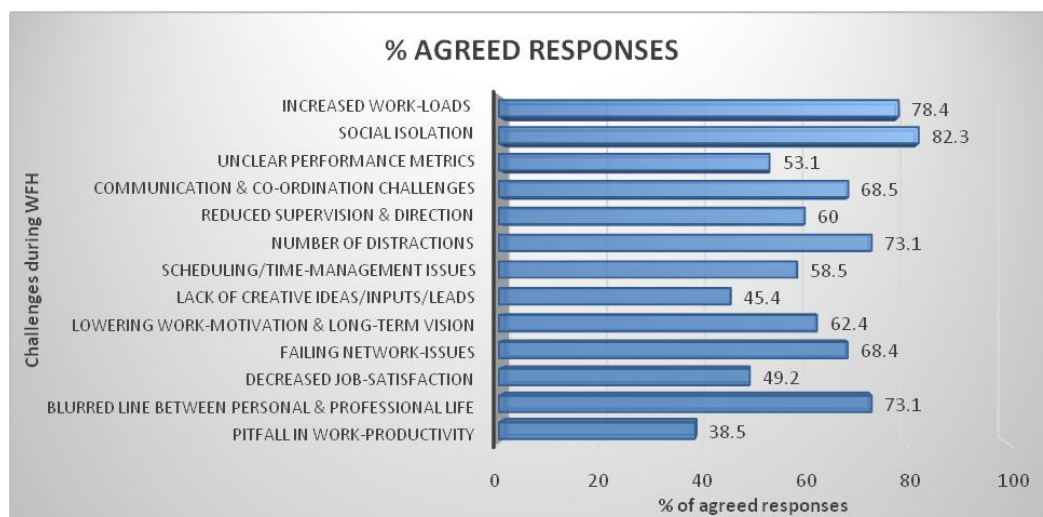


Figure 5: Challenges of WFH Pattern (Source: Primary survey analysis).

Common distractions during WFH model, as accustomed by the survey respondents are poor audio, noisy backgrounds, too many people talking at the same time, stuck audios, conscious video appearances, difficulty in brainstorming ideas, and unclear identity. Following are the percentage responses as observed:

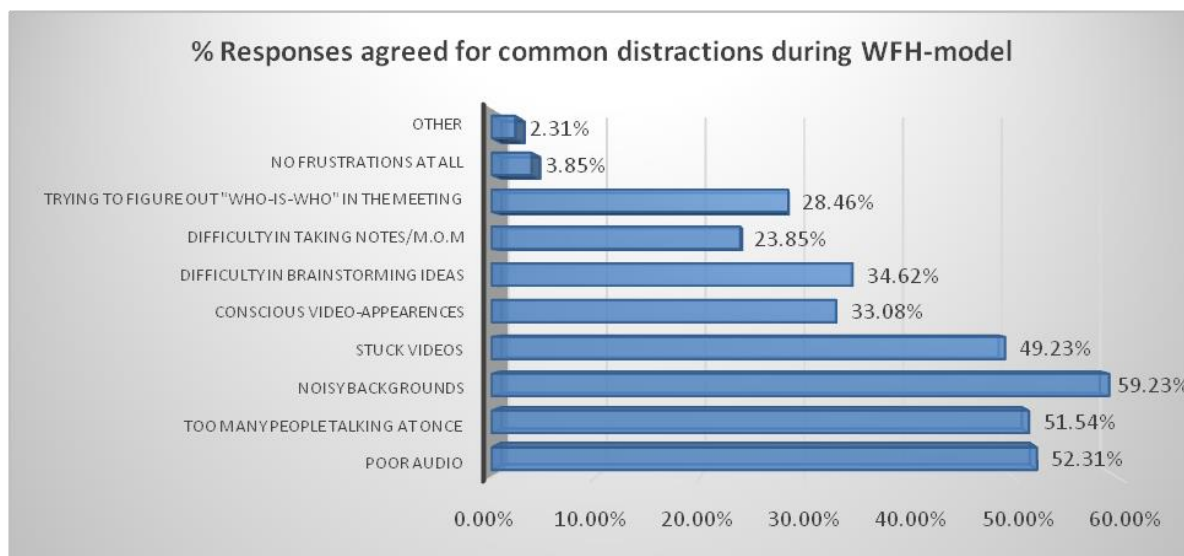


Figure 6: Common Distractions during WFH Model (Source: primary survey analysis).

As observed from the responses clearly that reducing no. of employees in offices has led to poor work motivation and job satisfaction amongst the employees leading to decreased work productivity and reduced supervision. Other than these, there has been increasing disturbed mental well-being and stress levels as observed in the post-covid work-life scenario because of pure work from home pattern, where 36.2% respondents believe to be stressed often with work-from home model, and only 11.6% respondents are believed to be stressed when followed 'Hybrid-work-model'.

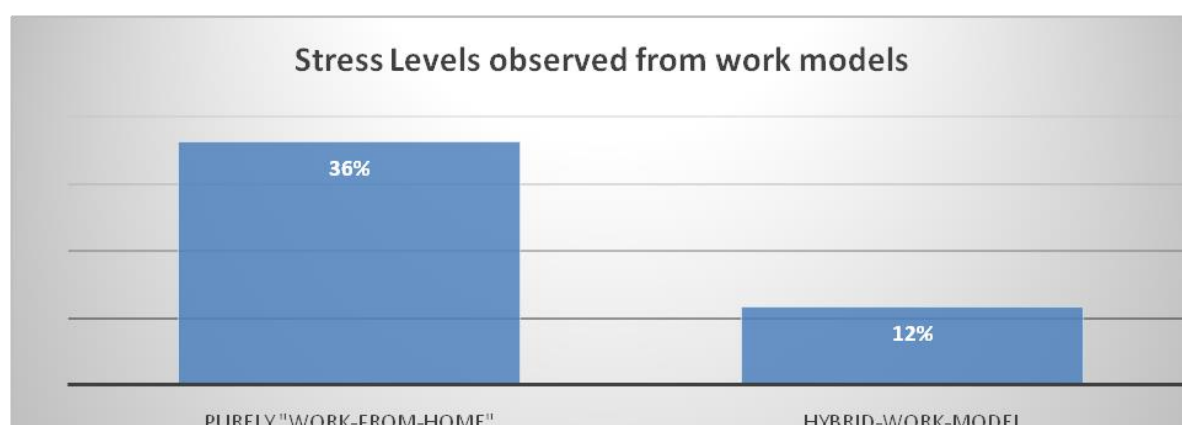


Figure 7: Stress Levels Observed from Work Models (Source: Primary survey analysis).

Majority of the respondents added their comments in the survey that they look forward to *hybrid-work-model* as a *regenerative workplace solution* which can actually focus the employee's physical & mental well-being, as work-from-home has made them exhausted between continuous juggle of family life and job-life and thus have no time left to participate in any further creative ideas or brainstorming for their respective jobs which led them demotivated, less-involved and dis-satisfied.

RESULTS

As ascertained from survey analysis observations, the most befitting factor of hybrid model are mostly improved mental well-being and increased social and professional life-balance along with better job satisfaction, whereas most respondents believe that the most challenging part of working purely from home post Covid is social loafing, increased workloads, and unclear performance metrics. As analyzed from the survey, during the pandemic, office workers around the world embraced the newfound leisure and the opportunity to spend more time with their family. However, many people have reported increasing feelings of loneliness, stress, and worry because of home working. They've battled to create healthy boundaries between their work and personal life. Besides their physical and mental well-being, their social well-being has been harmed, they miss the social side of their jobs and are looking forward to reconnecting with their coworkers. Employees fundamentally expect their employer to make a long-term commitment to their health and well-being, will include a new *Regenerative Workplace* to assist them in recovering from the pandemic's trauma.

The demand for the hybrid workplace solution demands for the regenerative workplace which can put people at the center that can focus on mental as well as physical well-being of all the employees and staff and push them to achieve desired performance metrics. As observed from the survey single males and females tend to enjoy the work-from-home pattern more than the ones having children at home and possess a professional life themselves, it reflected the increased stress levels and social imbalance in those respondents leading to de-motivated and lack of credit worthiness because of their non-stop work of trying to balance between family and job-life. Thus, the respondents with children all mostly prefer 'Hybrid-work-life' to add up more flexibility and work-motivation.

CONCLUSIONS

The Ego Revolution has been expedited by the pandemic. People anticipate a far more open and flexible work environment. Work and the office are consumed in the same manner as daily activities, products, and services are consumed. Rather than the other way around, they want work to adapt to their limits and desires.

Individuals have more opportunities to improve their quality of life because of increased flexibility and more sustainable workloads: better meals, more time with family, and the ability to take breaks, exercise more, and recharge through proper rest. Employers should take note of the remote work experience and can provide new health and wellness tools to their employees, while managers have a new responsibility to ensure that their teams get enough rest and recharge. Nevertheless, working from home is far from ideal. Finding the right mix of home and office work is the obvious answer- Hybrid-work-pattern, with clear benefits and drawbacks to all ways of working. Employees must be able to benefit from both methods of working, thus flexibility is essential because as analyzed from the survey the work-from-home pattern is befitting only the singles mostly but adds up more stress levels to the professionals with joint family and children at their home, which are 22% of the respondents. Thus, it can be used up by corporates and employers to plan for their future workplace solution post the pandemic to create more resilient work-models for employees by keeping in mind that employees and their energy are the most important asset to any company and hence needs to be valued and cared for, and this regenerative workplace solution will provide more flexibility, better work-life balance, more autonomy and higher work-motivation which will solve the problems of job satisfaction amongst individuals.

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